

Chapter -59

The realization that I wasn’t going to be immediately healed back to full was dawning on me, as I picked up the Leftovers from the Siren.

Congratulations! You have leveled up! x	
You have reached Level -14! +1 new Attribute Point available to invest!	
<i>Dungeon Clears required for Level -15</i>	<i>0/2</i>

“Huh, the Sub-Dungeon counted for my level-up requirement.”

“I got a level too,” Bee said. “Just one more now!”

“You know, I think they give a level for each dungeon you clear below level 10,” Panda remarked.

“That’s how it was with you, Gambit.”

“Did you get a Full Recovery?” I asked Bee.

She nodded. “You didn’t?”

I looked at my missing right arm and considered the pain in my entire body, plus the blood tripping from my ears that still rang with a tinnitus whine.

“...No.”

“I think level 1 to 10 counts as the tutorial,” Panda guessed.

“So now I’m just screwed then!?”

“Gambit, it’s called consequences.”

I sat down on the floor of the hallway with a huff. I knew he was right, but it was annoying. Of course, it had been unrealistic to expect to continue getting away with destroying my body to kill a boss, and then hoping to get a Full Recovery before I died from my wounds. Part of me suspected that this switch-up might be just to fuck with me specifically.

“Maybe defeating the Police Headquarters dungeon counts like normal and gives you a Full Recovery?” Bee guessed.

“Don’t give him hope,” Panda scolded her. “Let him stew in the consequences of his behavior.”

“You’re the one that told him to pull out the Plugin!” she defended me.

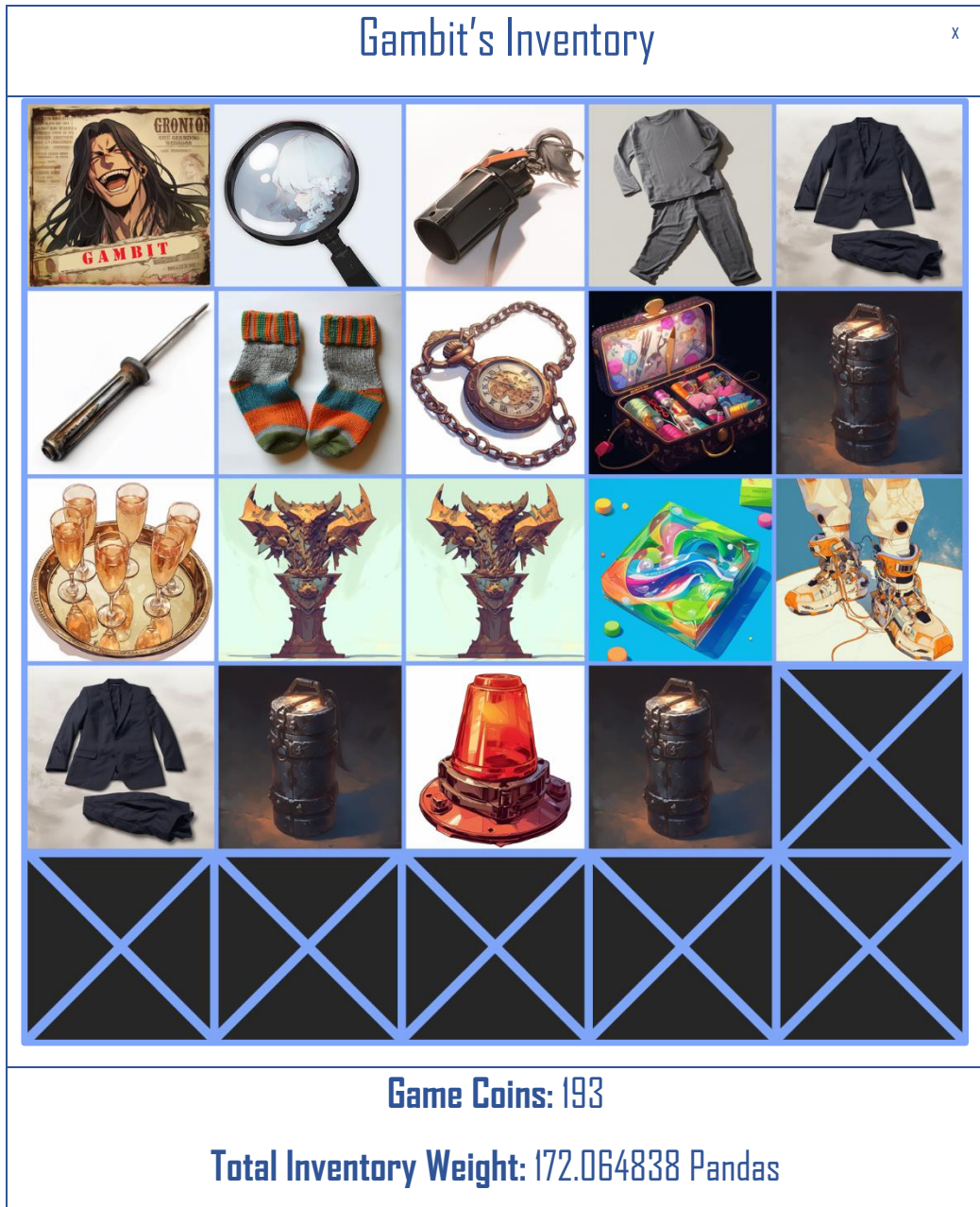
“It’s fine, Bee. He’s right.”

Panda gasped in shock.

“Stop,” he then said. “I don’t think I can actually handle you not being contrarian.”

“You two have a very unhealthy relationship,” Bee remarked dryly.

“Let’s see what we got,” I said, hoping to change the topic. “*Inventory.*”



“Hm, those Plugins are quite heavy.”

“You’re carrying around 172 times my weight? That’s quite a lot. I think?”

“I don’t feel very heavy,” I said.

I pulled out the Siren and the unHaunt Plugin, but before inspecting either, I brought up my Status and inserted my new point into Vitality. It was hard to argue for any of the other attributes, when Vitality increased both my Health and Stamina.

Level -14	'Gambit'	<i>Exit Code 3</i> ^x
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STATS			
Health: Isn't It Great?	Stamina: いいな	Armor: Dinner Plate Armor	
Carry Weight: 1050 Pandas	Top Speed: Snow Sled	Mana: !eM H0JpЯ02	
ATTRIBUTES			
Strength: 2415 lbs.	Dexterity: Quokka	Intelligence: ☹️	Vitality: Brisket
Athleticism: 子犬	Perception: 'Yes?'	Wisdom: ~_(\ツ)_/~	Defense: Ceramic
ABILITIES		CORE	PASSIVES
'Punch.harder() 'I_CAN_FLY' 'Dungeon-Break' 'Giant-Slayer Lance' '.interrupt() 'Skater Boy'		'Plugin Slot' null null 'unHero' gasm.org Anti Heroism	<i>Glitch</i> 'Insanity' 'Inanimate Voices' 'Math.multiply(Punch)' 'BIRTHDAY_SUIT' 'Reflective Shell' 'I-Frames' 'Transition Lenses' 'Outcast'

“I just realized,” Panda said, “Your Mana has the text ‘Scratch Me!’ on it.”

“I’m not touching that,” I told him seriously.

“Why not?”

“What if it like opens a hole in my body and my soul leaks out!?”

“Come on, Gambit, that’s too far-fetched... actually, hmm, nevermind.”

“See!”

I inspected the new Plugin I’d gotten.

<i>‘unHaunt Plugin’</i> x
—PLUGIN—
<i>Overcoming ones fears is a great way to become a little bit scary yourself. However, some horrors, like the creepy monstrosities born out of nightmares, aren’t really meant to be overcome...</i>
<i>As Nietzsche put it:</i> <i>“He who fights with monsters might take care lest he thereby become a monster.”</i>
<i>Plugin Ability: wannaCry</i>
<i>Plugin Passive: Jumpscare</i>
Weight: 81.211420 Pandas

“Ugh, they’re quoting Nietzsche,” I muttered.

“What’s wrong with Nietzsche!?” Bee asked, offended. “I wanna see! Show me!”

“Anyone actively quoting him is a total Edgelord,” I told her, then shared the info with a thought.

I realized I’d been operating a lot of the interfaces and such with just my mind lately.

“You just don’t get it,” she replied. “He was a brilliant mind.”

“She’s a total fan,” Panda remarked.

“I’m getting strong Normie vibes from you, Bee.”

She ignored me. “Show me the abilities!”

<i>‘wannaCry’</i> x
<i>Plugin Ability</i>

You know how to really make someone cry? Destroying the things they love the most. This isn't quite that, but it's still sure to make anyone you use it on soil their panties.

Indicate a target and utter the words ‘I'll make you cry!’ to disable their abilities for the duration specified below.

Duration: 2 minutes

Cooldown: 24 hours

‘Jumpscare’

x

Plugin Passive

Have you ever met those people who are just naturally terrifying? They don't even mean to, but the way they walk up on you or swing around corners suddenly always makes you jump out of your skin. Well, that's you now.

*Players become naturally terrified of you if they have less **Vitality** than your **Strength** value.*

*Additionally, every time you terrify or scare someone, they incur a 5% increase to their **Insanity Gauge**. However, those transformed into **Insanity Monstrosities** due to your actions now become **Boss-level Enemies** with twice the transformed **Player's original stats**.*

“Doesn't your unHero plugin do something similar?” Panda asked.

“You mean this?” I pulled up the Passive he was referring to.

‘Anti Heroism’

x

Plugin Passive

Why bother hunting down monsters when you can make your own?

*While fighting Players that are considered ‘Morally Good’, all your damage dealt to them also raises their **Insanity Gauge**.*

Side-effects include: monologuing about evil plans; maniacal laughter; world-domination ideas involving lasers; glowing-red eyes; & an astounding aptitude for acquiring henchmen.

“Yes! You’re definitely on track to becoming a real menace to humanity.”

“I wonder if the Insanity Monsters you make can be killed to count towards level-ups,” Bee said, a curious expression on her green-skinned face.

Panda and I both blinked.

“What?”

“Are you sure you aren’t taking the villain idea a bit too far?” Panda asked. “I mean, clearly the System is trying to turn Gambit into a monster, who creates monsters.”

I nodded. “Yeah, it does seem that way, doesn’t it?”

“But *you* don’t have to join in and also become a menace like him.”

I ignored him and said, “I’m impressed though, Bee. That’s some really sinister thinking.”

“I’m just being practical.”

“Help me put it into my Plugin Slot,” I told her.

“You’re kidding me...” Panda said, exasperatedly.